

CSR News Flash

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Center for Scientific Review
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CSR Makes It Easier for Program Staff to Tune in to Reviews

CSR is piloting a new online system that allows program officers from NIH Institutes and Centers to see in real time the lineup of applications being reviewed in CSR's study sections so they can more easily dial into the review meetings and listen to the review discussions.

It has always been important for program officers to be able to witness the reviews of the NIH applications assigned to them for possible funding. Hearing these reviews helps program officers more fully understand the strengths and weaknesses the reviewers saw in the applications. This knowledge is critical when program officers address questions from applicants and facilitate the second level of review for determining which applications are funded.

In recent years, it has become difficult for program officers to attend review meetings. There are more meetings now than ever, and more meetings are held in cities outside of the Washington, D.C., area.

A few years ago, CSR made it possible for program officers to listen to review discussions via a secure teleconference service. But life was still difficult for program officers, who often had to wait on the phone for their applications to be discussed and juggle a number of calls because their applications went to multiple review groups.

CSR responded by piloting the new "CSR Real Time Meeting Status" online system. "This was a great idea generated and implemented by some of our bright scientific review officers," said Toni Scarpa. "We've received lots of praise from participating program officers, and we will offer the service to all of them very soon."

About CSR

CSR organizes the peer review groups that evaluate the majority of grant applications submitted to NIH. These groups include experienced and respected researchers from across the country and abroad. Since 1946, CSR's mission has been to see that NIH grant applications receive fair, independent, expert, and timely reviews — free from inappropriate influences — so NIH can fund the most promising research. CSR also receives all incoming applications and assigns them to the NIH institutes and centers that fund grants. For more information, go to CSR's Web site—<http://www.csr.nih.gov>—or phone 301-435-1111.

About NIH

NIH — the Nation's Medical Research Agency — includes 27 Institutes and Centers and is a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. It is the primary federal agency for conducting and supporting basic, clinical and translational medical research, and it investigates the causes, treatments, and cures for both common and rare diseases. For more information about NIH and its programs, visit www.nih.gov.